

MONTEREY BAY NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY
ADVISORY COUNCIL

CONSERVATION WORKING GROUP

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, February 18, 1997

10:00 AM - 12:30 PM

Moss Landing Harbor District Office

Moss Landing, CA

Conservation Working Groups members in attendance were: Rachel Saunders, Chair (Center for Marine Conservation); David Iverson (Save Our Shores); Jack Wickham (Sierra Club-Ventana); Ellen Faurot-Daniels (Friends of the Sea Otter); Melissa Hippard (Save Our Shores); Corie Johnston (Sea Grant Extension Program); Daphne White (Pacific Grove Natural History Museum); and Joanne Flanders and Jane DeLay (MBNMS).

The meeting was called to order at 10:05 AM.

I. CWG ADMINISTRATION:

The DRAFT minutes from the January 15, 1997 meeting were approved as presented.

The next CWG meeting will be on TUESDAY, MARCH 18 FROM 10:00 AM - 12:30 PM AT MOSS LANDING. Agenda item suggestions included: priorities for research. Jack Wickham requested closure on the noise issue, asking that the CWG draft another letter on the subject. Jack requested that the CWG go beyond the Research Activity Panel (RAP) to a broader set of scientists who are interested in the subject of noise. Rachel suggested that Jack do some of the initial research to identify scientists and potential sources of funding for research on this subject. Along these lines, the CWG agreed to create a list of research and management priorities to present to the RAP as suggestions for future research projects.

Other discussion topics will include the underwater park and the package of ocean-related legislation that is working its way through Sacramento.

II. SANCTUARY REPORT

Joanne Flanders provided a written and verbal report on Sanctuary activities. Please see the Sanctuary's monthly activity report (Attachment A).

Of special note is the announcement that the staffs of the MBNMS and the Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary (GFNMS) will meet with each other sometime in March to brief each other about projects. Also, A Task Force is being set up (composed of SAC and non-SAC members) to assist in the development of a Memorandum of Understanding between the two Sanctuaries for management of the Northern region.

Update on the Sanctuary Managers position: the application period has closed. Interviews will be conducted on March 11 and 12 at the Pacific Fisheries Environmental Group (PFEG) building in Pacific Grove.

III. EDWARD F. RICKETTS UNDERWATER PARK

The City Councils of Monterey and Pacific Grove will meet for a special "Study session" on

February 26, 1997 in the Steinbeck Forum at the Monterey Conference Center. The public is invited to the meeting which will begin at 7:00 PM, although, there is no clear indication that time will be allotted for public testimony. The meeting will be an information gathering session and the recommendations prepared by the Parks and Recreation Departments of both cities will be presented. This is the first time that the City Councils will hear about the park in a formal way. No vote will be taken at this meeting. The issue will be decided upon by each City Council at two separate meetings. No time frame has yet been set.

CWG members are strongly urged to write in support of the underwater park and the recommendations prepared by the Center for Marine Conservation (CMC). Letters should be addressed to the Mayors of the Cities of Monterey and Pacific Grove. Call Rachel if you have any questions about the CMC proposal.

IV. COAST GUARD/NOAA VESSEL TRAFFIC REPORT

NOAA has met with the Coast Guard to determine the best way to address vessel traffic control issues in the MBNMS. Staff are currently working to review all related documents and will compile a list of strategies and recommendations contained in the materials. This information will be given to a special working group with representatives from government, industry and conservation in April for their evaluation. The results of their discussions will be presented to the public in a series of public workshops in June.

V. CONSERVATION REPRESENTATION ON THE SANCTUARY ADVISORY COUNCIL

CWG members agreed that the Chair of the CWG should continue to be the conservation representative to the SAC. The current term of the conservation representative will be up in September. The CWG will discuss the topic as part of the July 1997 meeting agenda.

VI. UPDATES:

1. Jade Collection DRAFT Proposed Rule -- the draft rule is expected to be released within the next month with provisions allowing for: 1) hand tools (no more than 36 inches in length) that cannot have moving parts or use electricity; 2) a 200-pound lift bag; 3) a take limited to what one person can carry out of the water; 4) no limit to the number of trips that can be made; and, 5) a permitting system for the take of larger stones. Rachel clarified that permits will be reviewed on a case by case basis and will be handled in the same manner other MBNMS permits are processed. Jade collectors may also need to get a permit from the State.

2. Sanctuary conference update: The Sanctuary Currents Symposium will be on Saturday, March 15, 1997 at the Coconut Grove in Santa Cruz. Registration is scheduled to begin at 8:30 AM. The Symposium will feature a morning panel discussion, a poster session, afternoon concurrent sessions, an awards ceremony, and the Ricketts Keynote Address presented by Greg Cailliet. The focus of the Symposium is ñFacets of Biodiversity.¹

Award recipients are as follows:

Public Officials: Bruce McPherson and Bill Reichmuth
Citizen: Mark Silberstein
Education: Jane Orbuch
Conservation: Holly Price
Science/Research: Bruce Robison
Organization: Moss Landing Marine Labs

CWG members were informed that there is still time to submit posters; call Corie Johnston at Moss Landing Marine Labs.

3. Ellen Faurot-Daniels wrote an excellent op-ed piece in the weekend edition of the Monterey Herald. Ellen is looking for funding to try to get some additional research to look at environmental contaminants that might be causing higher mortality rates in the Southern population of the California Sea Otter. It appears that something is affecting both sexes and all age groups. In Monterey, there is a 50% survival rate as opposed to an 85% survival rate elsewhere; translating into a very high monthly mortality rate with no apparent direct cause. Any way that we can get a multi-species look at contaminants in a cooperative venture with agencies and other institutions would be very beneficial at this point.

On March 13, 1997 at the Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen Assc. (PCFFA) office, there will be a meeting on California Coastal and Marine Legislation from 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM. The offices are located in the old Coast Guard building at Crissy Field in San Francisco. Results of this meeting will be included as a discussion topic on next CWG meeting agenda.

4. A Permanent Cetacean Exhibit at the Pacific Grove Museum -- opening March 16. A Friends of the Sea Otter temporary exhibit will be there until May 11.

5. Efforts are underway to get the kelp harvesting issue on the agenda of the California Department of Fish and Game. There was a meeting of the Fish and Game Commission in Monterey where several people from the public raised concerns about kelp harvesting.

6. California and the World Oceans Conference will be in San Diego March 24 -27, 1997.

7. Save Our Shores has a successful outreach program in Half Moon Bay. Stewards are being trained to educate students in the classroom about the marine environment as well as participating in a number of community outreach events.

On Saturday, April 5, 1997 Save Our Shores and the Gulf of the Farallones Association will sponsor a coastal hike.

8. The Sanctuaries and Reserves Division (SRD) is sending representatives to seek comments from the conservation community about the ATOC project. This may be a good opportunity for the CWG to urge SRD to broaden its research on sound.

The meeting adjourned at 12:30 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Jane M. DeLay
MBNMS Advisory Council Coordinator